

PRELIMINARY REPORT

2015: A1 – Cypresswood Drive

APPLICANT: BGE | Kerry R. Gilbert & Associates

KEY MAP: 324, 325

JURISDICTION: City of Houston ETJ

LAMBERT: 4367

DISTRICT/PRECINCT: City Council: N/A
Harris County Pct.: 3

PROPOSAL:

BGE | Kerry R. Gilbert & Associates is requesting the deletion of Major Thoroughfare Cypresswood Drive, between Becker Road and US 290, from the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP). The Major Thoroughfare is currently classified with 4 lanes and a 100-foot right-of-way (T-4-100).

APPLICANT'S JUSTIFICATION and HISTORY:

The Papadopoulos family, represented by Delta Troy Interests, LTD, owns a 27-acre tract on the north side of US Highway 290 (aka Hempstead Highway), located directly west of Becker Road and south of the existing Ranch Country and Cypresswood Trails subdivisions in northwest Harris County. The City of Houston's 2014 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan includes the extension of the proposed Major Thoroughfare Cypresswood Drive (T-4-100) through this tract. The overall existing and proposed alignment of Cypresswood Drive parallels the north side of US 290 for approximately six and a half miles, from Cypress Rosehill Road until just west of Becker Road, where it is currently required to cross Becker Road south of the Ranch County subdivision, curve to the south within the 27-acre subject tract, and terminate into the frontage road of US 290.

Cypresswood Drive first appeared on the City of Houston MTFP map in 1966, when the scope of the MTFP map was expanded to encompass a much larger area than the 1964 MTFP map. At this time, Cypresswood Drive's alignment crossed US 290 at an angle and continued west to the extent of the City's jurisdiction. In 1972, the two-mile thoroughfare grid in this area was upgraded to a one-mile grid and Becker Road, a north-south street crossing US 290 just east of Cypresswood Drive, was added to the major thoroughfare plan. When TxDOT prepared construction plans for improvements to US 290, a full interchange was established for Becker Road but not for Cypresswood Drive. Beginning with the 2003 MTFP map, the alignment of Cypresswood Drive across US 290 was severed, leaving Cypresswood Drive on the north to curve downward and terminate into US 290, while the segment south of US 290 (now Baethe Road) was terminated at Roberts Road (aka Katy Hockley Road).

The proposed amendment is to remove the portion of Cypresswood Drive between Becker Road and US 290, which is the remainder of the severed crossing of US 290. This portion is approximately a quarter of a mile in length and is contained entirely within the subject 27-acre property. The removal of this portion would result in Cypresswood Drive ending as a T-intersection with Becker Road. This is the same condition that was created south of US 290 in 2003, when the highway crossing was originally removed from the thoroughfare plan – the extension of thoroughfare Baethe Road ends in a T-intersection at Roberts Road, rather than curving north to terminate at US 290 opposite Cypresswood Drive. The applicant contends

PRELIMINARY REPORT

that the owner of the subject property has been unable to develop or sell this tract due to the burden created by the required major thoroughfare. Deleting this segment of Cypresswood Drive from the MTFP will remove the superfluous portion of the major thoroughfare and allow the subject property to proceed with development.

In order to achieve the current MTFP alignment of Cypresswood Drive, a sub-standard curve radius would be required within the subject site. Additionally, Becker Road already has an underpass and ramp interchange with US 290 less than half a mile to the east; the next interchange to the west is located at Roberts Road, one mile away from Becker Road. A new crossing of US 290 is neither necessary nor feasible for this area, and therefore the current MTFP alignment requires Cypresswood Drive to terminate as a T-intersection into the one-way frontage road of US 290. The extension of Cypresswood Drive to the frontage road in this vicinity could conflict with the existing entry ramp for the main lanes of US 290.

The subject 27-acre tract has nearly 2000' of frontage on US 290 and additional access to the major thoroughfare Becker Road, which provide adequate access for any future development on the subject site. Cypresswood Drive cannot extend further west due to the existing adjacent conditions, and thus its removal will not deprive any other tract of its future access. The region is currently developing; however, all current and future traffic can be carried by the major thoroughfare grid network and the existing highway intersections and would not be impacted by the removal of this segment of Cypresswood Drive.

This quarter-mile interval of Cypresswood Drive provides no benefit to regional mobility, the overall thoroughfare grid, or local traffic circulation, either now or in the future, but it creates a substantial and cost-prohibitive burden for the development of the subject tract, due to the required construction of the major thoroughfare and the loss of property for right-of-way dedication through the middle of the property. Furthermore, this segment will not have the traffic volumes, traffic speeds, or property access requirements that merit inclusion in the MTFP at any classification level.

POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVE:

In an effort to preserve the grid network and circulation in this area, P&D staff will evaluate reclassification of Cypresswood Drive between Becker Road and US 290 as a Minor Collector with 60' right-of-way (ROW). The proposed Minor Collector classification would only require a 2-lane street design which allows for flexibility in geometric design as compared to the existing 100' ROW 4-lane Major Thoroughfare designation for the roadway.